

Child Safeguarding Policy

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**ChildFund Japan Nepal Office
Child Safeguarding Policy**

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1 Introduction

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office is the country office of ChildFund Japan, a Japanese non-governmental organization. ChildFund Japan is a child-focused development organization that provides opportunity to children for their wholistic development. It is committed to promote the rights of the child through international development cooperation in the spirit of harmonious coexistence. Globally, it is working in Nepal Philippines, and other countries as a member of ChildFund Alliance, a global network of 11 child focused development organizations working in more than 60 countries around the world.

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office was established in Nepal by entering General Agreement with Social Welfare Council (SWC) in February 2006. As a child-focused organization, ChildFund Japan Nepal Office recognizes its responsibility to adopt and abide by this Child Safeguarding Policy to ensure that children with whom it comes into contact are safeguarded from abuse including physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, exploitation, and violence.

To ensure the safeguarding of the children that come to its contact by any means, this policy comes into effect.

1.1 Objective the policy:

The objective of this Policy is to safeguard all the children that come to contact with (directly or indirectly) ChildFund Japan Nepal Office, promote well-being of children, and ensure that our actions during our interventions or programs do not cause any harm to them.

1.2 Definition

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office adopt the following definition:

"Child Safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programs do no harm to the children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organization has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities."

(source: Keeping Children Safe)

1.3 Principles underpinning our Safeguarding Policy

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will continue to improve as organization to meet the International Child Safeguarding Standard in the area of Policy, People, Procedures and Accountability. Our policy is based on following principles:

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1. All children have equal rights to protection from all forms of violence, as declared in Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. The best interests of the child will be of primary consideration in all activities concerning them.
3. We all will care and protect the children especially those who are vulnerable and ensure about their safety.
4. The organization will be responsible to care for the children with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.
5. We will work in a transparent way and make Child Safeguarding a priority acknowledging that likelihood of abuse and harm will be more if staffs, volunteers, partners, children, families, and community members are not able to raise their concerns.
6. We will work together with other organizations and agencies (state, departments, and ministries mandate to protect children) to promote child safeguarding.
7. Child Safeguarding approach will be mainstreamed in all stages of our operation, programs, project activities and interventions ensuring that these are designed and delivered in a way that do no harm to children.

1.4 (Basic values)

The following are the underlying basic values:

1. Dignify and value of all children

Create safe environment for the children where dignity of each individual child for being unique is respected.

2. Children's right to participate

Children have right to participate in decision making process that affects them and actively contribute to their own development.

3. Empowerment

Encourage children to uphold power to protect themselves and to express their voices on matters that affect them.

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4. Respect children's rights

Uphold four pillars: Survival Rights, Development Rights, Right to be Protected and Participation Rights as regulated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all level staffs, board members, and associates.

Associates means the following: volunteers, interns, consultants, vendors, all partners including implementing partners, visitors, donors, sponsors (individual and corporate), in principle. This will also include all others who work with children on ChildFund Japan's behalf, visit Children's programs or who have access to sensitive information about children in ChildFund Japan's programs.

3 Prevention

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office employees and associates should be aware of the circumstances which create and increase risks for the children and mitigate those risks. To mitigate the risks, ChildFund Japan will abide by following requirements.

3.1 Risk assessment/ risk mitigation

A risk assessment of all ChildFund Japan's operations, programs and project activities will be conducted. (See Annex 1 for Risk Assessment Template) Risk mitigation plan and strategies will be developed, which minimize the risk to the children and incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programs, operations and activities which involve or impact upon children.

3.2 Safe recruitment

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will ensure that it applies the highest standards in its recruitment and vetting policies across the organization. Candidates are checked for their suitability for working with children and their understanding of child safeguarding.

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ChildFund Japan Nepal Office takes diligent measures to screen out all people who might seek to use ChildFund to harm children or whose past actions indicate an unacceptable risk of such harm. These measures include addressing safeguarding in job advertisements (when feasible), applications, interviews, and references. During the interview process, applicants are asked about previous work with children. For references supplied by applicants, questions are asked about suitability of the candidate to work with vulnerable children for a child-focused agency. Documentation of reference is kept on file.

3.3 Behavior protocols/ code of conduct

Staffs, board members and associates will agree to ChildFund Japan Nepal Office's Code of Conduct (Annex 2) when they are employed and/ or start their work with ChildFund Japan Nepal Office. Breaching the code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

Staffs and board members who work for the organization with this Policy and Code of Conduct need to follow within and outside of the workplace. This means adopting appropriate behavior themselves and reporting on concerns that staffs and board members may have about child whether in work or outside.

3.4 Education/ training

All staff, Board members and Associates receive child safeguarding training to help them understand why it is necessary to safeguard and protect children and to be fully aware of the procedure for reporting concerns.

3.5 Communication (use of images and children's information) regarding children

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will ensure all the images and videos of children are undertaken with sensitivity to safeguard the child's right to dignity, identity, confidentiality, and privacy. Children will be informed prior about the interviews. Before video and images to be taken, the consent form will be signed by children and from their teachers or parents. (See Annex 3 for consent form)

Pictures of children should always be decent and respectful. Consent to use information obtained in interviews and or images of the children who have been interviewed should be obtained from children themselves (if they are of an age, understanding and possess the maturity to do so) and from their parents and or guardians.

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Pictures, materials, and personal information regarding children will be held in a secure area where practicable and every caution will be exercised to ensure its security. Access to these is by way of permission only

In our use of information and visual images, both photographic stills and video, our overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in our portrayal of children, families, and communities.

4 Implementing partners

Agreements with partners will include a statement that partners who do not have a child safeguarding policy will either abide by ChildFund Japan Nepal Office's policy or develop their own as a condition of the partnership. Also, ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will provide training on child safeguarding to the implementing partners.

5 Reporting and Responding to concerns

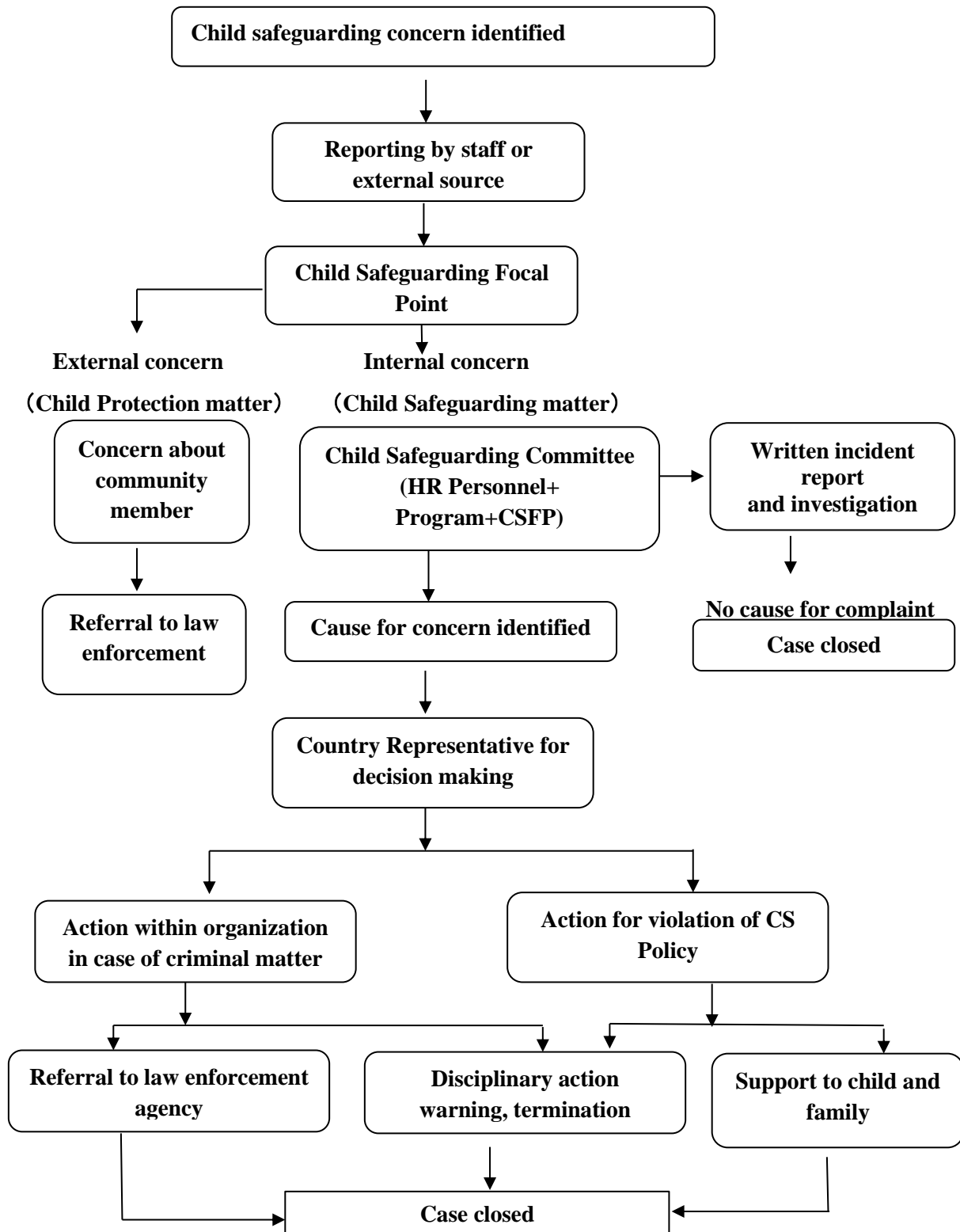
All staffs, board members and associates must be aware of the steps to take and personnel to contact when safeguarding concerns arise. If he/she fails to report the concern, it will be treated as a serious issue and may result in disciplinary action.

As for the child protection if a child is in danger or in harm's way, call 100 or the local authorities immediately.

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Flowchart for reporting child safeguarding concern

Confidentiality will be kept all along the process and staffs are informed on a need-to-know basis.



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ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will receive disclosures from children and youth with sensitivity and will prioritize avoiding to put concerned children and youth at risk.

If told directly from child or young person that they are being or have been abused, respond as below.

- Listen to and accept what the child or young person says but do not press for information.
- Let the child or young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Do not investigate and do not inform, question, or confront the alleged abuser.
- Take the alleged abuse seriously.
- Record carefully what you have heard on the reporting form.

5.1 (Handling of reports)

Any reports on child safeguarding concerns will be treated seriously and with confidentiality. Safety and the best interest of the child will be prioritized.

5.2 (Response to a whistle-blower)

The concerns of serious malpractice against this policy by any staff will be protected from victimization or any other detrimental treatment if they are raised in good faith. Deliberate false allegations are serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated.

5.3 (Investigation)

The staff, board member and associate who become subject of the complaint (alleged perpetrator) and all witnesses must cooperate fully and openly with internal and statutory investigations and hearings. Their confidentiality will be protected and information, which could identify them, will be shared on a 'need to-know' basis only.

A prompt and appropriate response will ensure that the situation is not perpetuated and that all individuals involved are clear on issues and actions to be taken.

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5.4 Staffs and board members under allegation

Allegations against staff and board member will normally result in suspending the staff member from their employment immediately subject to investigation of the issue. If the allegation is a criminal issue, this will be reported to the formal authorities before taking action or informing the alleged perpetrator.

5.5 Internal investigation

Person with the skills to do so will conduct internal investigations. Child Safeguarding Committee comprises of 3 staffs will be responsible to carry out the entire investigation. The investigation will involve interviews of all parties involved including witnesses to gather all relevant details of the allegation. The report will be submitted to the country representative including the recommendation of the committee for final approval. In case of country representative being alleged of accusation, the committee will forward the report to the ChildFund Japan Head Office Child Safeguarding Focal Point for action.

Appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken if the allegation is found to be true. If the allegation is found to be without base, appropriate steps should be taken to minimize damage to the reputation of the individual accused.

Internal investigations related to allegations of criminal behavior will be discussed with the formal authorities prior to embarking on this course of action to ensure that the organization does not compromise the formal investigation.

5.6 Others

Support and counseling will be made available for those involved in the report and response.

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will carry out local mapping of relevant Child Protection laws and organizations we may call upon for support and compile the information as the checklist.

6 Monitoring and review

(Monitoring)

Child safeguarding is incorporated into ChildFund Japan's Nepal Office annual reporting processes.

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(Review)

This policy will be reviewed at minimum of every 3 years or when it is shown necessary that additional issues need to be identified and addressed through this policy.

7 Implementing system

ChildFund Japan may put in place Child Safeguarding Committee within its office in line with this Policy.

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office will include Child Safeguarding in the Inception to the Project Staff. The project staff will include child safeguarding as an integral part of the project and disseminate the information to the children, parents, and community members in an appropriate way.

Country Director will be responsible for determining policy and good practice and for implementation of the policy in all activities related to their areas of organization responsibility. Annually, CFJ NO will conduct a self-assessment of safeguarding and implementation of Child Safeguarding Policy together with Annual Work Plan and Budget. Besides, the safeguarding concerns will be reported with the quarterly report of the program. It will help CFJ NO track progress in safeguarding recording good practices and identifying areas for actions.

8 Revision and abolition

Revision and abolition of this Policy is subject to approval of ChildFund Japan Head Office.

-End-

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Annex: 1 Risk Assessment Template

Risk assessment:									
Risk no.	Who is at risk?	Factors for causing risk	Potential risk	Controls in place	Probability of occurrence	Risk rating H,M,L	Additional controls agreed to be in place for risk minimization	By whom?	By when?

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Annex: 2 Code of Conduct

All the staff, volunteers and donors / sponsors must sign the Code of Conduct before commencing duties.

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office (CFJ NO) considers all forms of abuse towards children to be unacceptable, and recognized that it has a duty to safeguard children that is to keep them safe, promote their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and harm. Neglect, physical, psychological/emotional, and sexual violence are the main forms of abuse.

By signing the Code of Conduct, I agree that:

I will always:

- Treat children with respect and equally regardless of their age, sex, language, religion, opinion, or nationality, ethnic or social origin, status, class, caste, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristics.
- Support children in taking part in decision making that concerns them according to their age and level of maturity.
- Use child friendly and positive behavior with children during their supervision.
- Empower children to protect themselves.
- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children
- Aware community and children regarding their right to report if any concerns arise and procedure of raising concern
- Preserve the child's autonomy and ensure that I do not do things that child can do for herself/himself.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Maintain a culture of communication and create trust with the children and their families, communities, other staff and volunteers and representatives of partner organizations so that concerns may be shared and discussed.

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- Plan activities and organize the workplace in such a way to minimize the risk of harm taking into account the age and development of the child.
- Ensure that information concerning children, families and communities remains confidential.
- Behave in a way that sets a good example (avoid smoking, showing disrespect towards colleagues, etc.)
- Obtain permission from the child and their parents before taking a photograph, recording, or using the child's image, what they have said or their history. This includes explaining to children and their parents how the photos or messages will be used.
- Ensure photographs, films, videos, and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
- ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I will never:

- Engage with children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts
- Invite child from our working area or their relatives to my home or develop a relationship with a child or their family, which may be considered outside normal professional boundaries.
- Work with or transport child alone without prior information to my manager unless necessary for child safety.
- Sleep close to unsupervised (unaccompanied by supervisor or guardian) children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible
- Use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras, or social media inappropriately to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium
- use physical punishment on children
- use language or behavior towards children that are age-wise or culturally inappropriate, harassing, demeaning, abusive, or sexually provocative.

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- Hire children for domestic or other labor, which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury
- Consume drugs or alcohol while working with the children
- Show the faces of the children who are exploited sexually, victims of trafficking, abuse, in conflict with the law, linked to armed groups or who can easily be located even if their identity has been modified.
- Publish a story or image which may endanger the child, their family or community.
- Post pictures or information about children on personal websites or social networks (such as Facebook).

I read “ChildFund Japan Nepal Office Child Safeguarding Policy (including its Code of Conduct)”, understood what is written and will comply with its content.

By doing so, it will lead to promotion of children’s rights, creation of physically and psychologically safe environment for children, and protection of children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, violence, and neglect.

Name : _____

Designation : _____

Signature : _____

Date : _____

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Annex:3 Consent Form

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office is an organization that provides support to the children, their families and communities in emergency relief and their development. To achieve its goal, CFJ NO planned many activities. Those activities will promote child welfare and enhance participation of the children. CFJ NO and its partner will ensure that the best interest of the child will be topmost priority during their conduction. However, CFJ NO/ partners needs to receive consent from the parents/ guardians or care givers before any activity.

Activity Consent *(Please tick as appropriate):*

- I/we give my/our consent for my child/our child (_____) to travel and participate in the ChildFund Japan Nepal Office activities.

- I/we permit ChildFund Japan Nepal Office to be responsible for my/our child during the activities and make decisions for them concerning any medical treatment, which may be required during the trip.

- I/we ensure that I/we have full authority to give consent required for in this document.

Media Consent *(Please tick as appropriate):*

- I/we allow my/our consent for my/our child to participate in media activities such as photographs, films, videotapes, audiotapes, or other forms of recording and which may appear in print such as newspapers or online.

- I/ we do not give my/our consent for my/our child to participate in media activities.

I/we ensure that I/we have read and understood the Consent Form and agree to abide by its contents.

Name of Child : _____
Signature of caregivers/parents/guardian : _____
Relationship with Child : _____
Contact Number : _____
Date : _____

Annex 4: Child Safeguarding Focal Point

Roles and Responsibilities of the Child Safeguarding Focal Point

Child Safeguarding Focal Points will be responsible to carry out following duties:

- Responsible to plan and deliver trainings on CS for staff and organize awareness raising campaigns for volunteers, interns, children, and others.
- Act as a complaint's receiver for sensitive complaints, record all the relevant information on appropriate forms, contribute to appropriate referral of victims for assistance and support in monitoring of complaints. Provide feedback to complainants.
- Access child safeguarding risks within the organization including its programs and projects
- Make formal referral to a statutory agency or other organization if appropriate in consultation with the Child Safeguarding Committee
- Ensure the referral pathways for child safeguarding responses are updated in consultation with Child Safeguarding Committee/ Senior Management Team
- Provide overall support to the wider implementation of policies and procedure to safeguard children
- Coordinate with other agencies such as child welfare, health, and law enforcement contacts in order to have information available if an incident occurs and or external advice is needed.